

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 NEA-09 SAJ-01 IO-10 SS-15 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8664

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 4242

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJ: MILITIA BREAK UP CROWD AT MOSCOW SYNAGOGUE

PASSOVER SERVICES

REF: (A) MOSCOW 15249, OCTOBER 9, 1974 (B) MOSCOW 3989

1. MOSCOW JEWISH SOURCES CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF
MARCH 27 BASIC FACTS OF INCIDENT AT MOSCOW SYNAGOGUE
PASSOVER SERVICES EVENING MARCH 26 AS CARRIED BY
AP WIRE. SOURCES SAID INTENT OF MILITIA CLEARLY
WAS TO CREATE UPLEASANTNES BY KEEPING JEWS OFF
SIDEWALKS SURROUNDING SYNAGOGUE IN CONTRAST TO RECENT
MORE MODERATE TREATMENT, ESPECIALLY AFTER SIMCHAS
TORAH SERVICES LAST OCTOBER 8 WHEN LARGE NUMBERS OF
WORSHIPPERS WERE ALLOWED TO DANCE IN STREESTS (REF A).
UGLY BEHAVIOR OF MILITIA REPORTEDLY TOOK JEWS BY
SURPRISE -- ALTHOUGH THEY ARE ACCUSTOMED TO MILITIA
PRESENCE AND CROWD CONTROL AT JEWISH HOLIDAYS, MILITIA
HAVE NOT ACTED SO STERNLY IN SEVERAL YEARS. SOURCES
SAID THEY KNEW THERE WERE ARRESTS, BUT WERE UNABLE
TO SAY HOW MANY (AP CLAIMED TEN JEWS WERE ARRESTED)
OR WHETHER THOSE PICKED UP WERE MERELY DETAINED
OR CHARGED WITH CRIMES.

2. SAME SOURCES FELT INTENT OF AUTHORITIES WAS TO
GIVE FURTHER WARNING TO JEWS THAT ACTIVITIES
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CONNECTED WITH EMIGRATION MOVEMENT WOULD BE DEALT

WITH SEVERELY. IN THIS CONNECTION, SOURCES SAID
THE HAVE HEARD TRIAL OF TWO JEWS ARRESTED AFTER
DEMONSTRATION IN FRONT OF LENIN LIBRARY (REF B)
IN FEBRUARY IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN MARCH 31. SOME
SOURCES FELT THAT TRIAL, AND PERHAPS FUTURE TRIAL OF
THOSE ARRESTED AT SYNAGOGUE IS MEANT TO BE BEGINNING OF
BROADER CAMPAIGN OF HARASSMENT OF JEWISH ACTIVISTS,
PARTICULARLY IN MOSCOW, WITH INTENT OF FURTHER
DISCOURAGING EMIGRATION. SOURCES STATED THAT NUMBER
OF WELL-KNOWN JEWISH ACTIVISTS HAVE BEEN CALLED IN
RECENTLY BY KGB AND MILITIA AND WARNED AGAINST FURTHER
DEMONSTRATIONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES. SOME, EVEN THOUGH
MIDDLE-AGED, HAVE ALLEGEDLY BEEN THREATENED WITH
MILITARY CALL-UP. IN FACT, SEVERAL ACTIVISTS HAVE
LEFT MOSCOW TEMPORARILY BECAUSE THEY FEEL THEIR
SITUATION, WHICH IS BAD ALREADY, IS TAKING A
TURN FOR THE WORSE.
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